Hon. John Choate
Administrative Law Judge, Office of Medicare Hearings and Appeals, U.S. Department of Health & Human Services
by Zina Daimi Ashourian

Judge John Choate served as a federal administrative law judge with the Office of Medicare Hearings and Appeals (OMHA) in the Arlington, Va., field office of the U.S. Department of Health & Human Service (HHS) from 2005 until his retirement in May 2016. Judge Choate is a proud veteran, an esteemed colleague, a mathematician, and a respected mentor. He is always ready and willing to provide young attorneys with advice about the law, real estate, tax, and life in general. Judge Choate has influenced the careers and lives of many through a distinguished and diverse legal career. He will be sorely missed at OMHA.

A Strong Background
Education. A native of Oklahoma City, Judge Choate graduated from the University of Oklahoma with majors in mathematics, political science, and English. He received his Juris Doctor from Yale Law School, where he was nominated to the Rhodes Scholarship State Selection Committee.

Forty-One Years of Military Service. Judge Choate is a strong advocate for serving in the U.S. military thanks to his family’s long tradition of military service. Relatives fought in every major American conflict, from the French and Indian War of 1754-1763, through the American Revolution, the War of 1812, the Civil War, and both World Wars. Eager to follow that tradition, he was commissioned a second lieutenant in the U.S. Air Force at the age of 20—before the 26th Amendment lowered the voting age to 18—making him the youngest commissioned officer since the Cold War. He served with distinction for 41 years and received many awards, including the Meritorious Service Medal with two oak-leaf clusters, Air Force Training Ribbon, Air Force Outstanding Unit Award, Air Force Organizational Excellence Award, National Defense Service Medal with device, Air Force Longevity Service Award with five devices, and Armed Forces Reserve Medal with silver hourglass and M device.

Securities. He was certified by the United States District Court as an expert on valuation of public company and listed securities trading. He successfully defended a client accused of a multimillion dollar securities fraud. He prevented erroneous issuance of warrants and stock as requested by stockholder claimant’s counsel, thereby avoiding violation of state and federal securities laws. He reduced shareholder approval time from months to one day by using state law provisions to permit informal resolutions, thereby improving convenience, saving money, and providing valuable intangible benefits. In addition, he completed within budget and on schedule a project that obtained exemptions from security laws in 35 states for a first-ever auto-body repair shop cooperative.

Litigation. Judge Choate successfully litigated various bankruptcy cases, commercial credit litigation, and...
Judge Choate served as an administrative law judge with OMHA from 2005 until his retirement in 2016. Judge Choate’s family has a long tradition of military service. Relatives fought in every major American conflict, from the French and Indian War of 1754-1763, through the American Revolution, the War of 1812, the Civil War, and both World Wars.